Listing of Claims

The following is a listing of clams pending in the present application.

1. (cancelled)
2. (cancelled)
3. (cancelled)
4. (cancelled)
5. (cancelled)
6. (cancelled)
7. (cancelled)
8. (cancelled)
9. (cancelled)
10. (cancelled)
11. (cancelled)
12. (cancelled)
13. (cancelled)
14. (cancelled)
15. (cancelled)
16. (cancelled)
17. (currently amended) [The invention of claim 1] A process for marking an article by applying thereto a taggant, a marking formulation comprising a taggant, or an article marked with a taggant, wherein the taggant comprises a plurality of microparticles having two or more distinguishable marked layers corresponding to a predetermined numeric code, the invention characterized in that:

    the plurality of the particles comprises a plurality of microparticle sets of at least one microparticle,

    each microparticle set is characterized by a specific marker layer combination different from each other microparticle set, and

    the combination of microparticle sets employed in said taggant collectively forms said numeric code,

    wherein said numeric code comprises date information.

18. (currently amended) [The invention of claim 17] A process for marking an article by applying thereto a taggant, a marking formulation comprising a taggant, or an article marked with a taggant, wherein the taggant comprises a plurality of microparticles having two or more distinguishable marked layers corresponding to a predetermined numeric code, the invention characterized in that:

the plurality of the particles comprises a plurality of microparticle sets of at least one microparticle,

each microparticle set is characterized by a specific marker layer combination different from each other microparticle set, and

the combination of microparticle sets employed in said taggant collectively forms said numeric code,

wherein each marker layer has three layers.

19. (currently amended) [The invention of claim 18 wherein] A process for marking an article by applying thereto a taggant, a marking formulation comprising a taggant, or an article marked with a taggant, wherein the taggant comprises a plurality of microparticles having two or more distinguishable marked layers corresponding to a predetermined numeric code, the invention characterized in that:

the plurality of particles comprises a plurality of microparticle sets of at least one microparticle,

each microparticle set is characterized by a specific marker layer combination different from each other microparticle set, and

the combination of microparticle sets employed in said taggant collectively forms said numeric code,

wherein the numeric code comprises date information and each marker layer combination has three layers, including one said marker layer combination coded to indicate a year.

20. (currently amended) [The invention of claim 19] A process for marking an article by applying thereto a taggant, a marking formulation comprising a taggant, or an article marked with a taggant, wherein the taggant comprises a plurality of

microparticles having two or more distinguishable marked layers corresponding to a predetermined numeric code, the invention characterized in that:

the plurality of the particles comprises a plurality of microparticle sets of at least one microparticle,

each microparticle set is characterized by a specific marker layer combination different from each other microparticle set, and

the combination of microparticle sets employed in said taggant collectively forms said numeric code,

wherein the numeric code comprises date information including one said marker layer combination coded to indicate a year and each marker layer combination has three layers,

wherein the numeric code includes two marker layer combinations coded to include a day within said year.

21. (currently amended) [The invention of claim 19] A process for marking an article by applying thereto a taggant, a marking formulation comprising a taggant, or an article marked with a taggant, wherein the taggant comprises a plurality of microparticles having two or more distinguishable marked layers corresponding to a predetermined numeric code, the invention characterized in that:

the plurality of particles comprises a plurality of microparticle sets of at least one microparticle,

each microparticle set is characterized by a specific marker layer combination different from each other microparticle set, and

the combination of microparticle sets employed in said taggant collectively forms said numeric code,

wherein said numeric code comprises date information, including one said marker layer combination coded to indicate a year and each marker layer combination has three layers,

wherein said numeric code further includes a second said marker layer combination coded to indicate a month within said year and a third said marker layer combination coded to indicate a day within said month.